

## IRAN'S POLICIES DURING WORLD WAR II

went altogether smoothly and due courtesy was shown their representatives except for an unfortunate incident on the Turkish border toward which the Axis diplomatic convoy had been directed. There all the heavy luggage of the Axis diplomats was suddenly confiscated by the Soviet authorities.

During these days of feverish activity one more crisis was ripening. The position of Reza Shah became obviously very uncomfortable.

The change of cabinet signified a change in policy, and it was difficult to imagine that the ruler who had so closely collaborated with the Germans during the past decade could continue on his throne in the new circumstances. Yet, paradoxically enough, there was widespread conviction among the Iranians that, despite all his pro-German leanings, Reza Shah was a friend and perhaps a tool of the British. Such a popular feeling was, of course, most inconvenient to the British government. It decided, therefore, to disassociate itself completely from the person of the Shah. Consequently a vigorous radio campaign beaming from New Delhi and London was inaugurated in the beginning of September. These broadcasts stressed the tyrannical rule of the Shah, his injustices and exploitation of the people. As a result the ruler whom nobody had dared to criticize openly for the past two decades became subject to more and more pronounced attacks among the people. His prestige fell rapidly. Yet the Shah clung tenaciously to his throne and refused to believe the gravity of the situation. On the evening of the day of the Allied invasion (August 25) the Shah asked the United States Embassy to use its good offices between Iran and the invading states. This request was

accompanied by a direct telegram to President Roosevelt. On receipt of the President's reply the Shah, on September 6, summoned the American Minister to his palace. During the conversation that ensued, he thanked the President for his declaration of friendship and good will and expressed his appreciation that the President was closely following events in Iran and his satisfaction that the American government had taken note of British and Soviet statements that they had no designs against the independence of Iran. The Shah stated, furthermore, that he had no sympathy with the Germans and said that Britain and Russia could have satisfied their desires by friendly negotiations instead of the use of force.